

**OPAG Minutes**  
**Ombudsman Program Advisory Group Meeting**  
**Conference Call**  
**08 Feb 12; 1300 EST**  
**Commander, Navy Installations Command**

**Members in attendance were:**

Mrs. Monica French, CNO Ombudsman-at-Large  
Mrs. Laure' Ferguson, Senior Leadership Spouse Advisor (VCNO)  
CDR John Pucciarelli, Command Leadership School  
CDR David Mater, Exceptional Family Member Program  
FLTCM Scott Benning, N913, Manpower, Training and Education  
FORCM Christopher Engles, CNIC  
CMDCM Shaun Brahmsteadt, Command Leadership School  
Mr. James Warren, Reserve Forces Command Family Support Program Manager  
Ms. Marilyn Haumer, Command Leadership School  
Ms. Stephanie Du Bose, Active Component Ombudsman Representative  
Ms. Jeanne Dusek, Reserve Component Ombudsman Representative

Ms. Renee C. Harris, Supervisor, CNIC Family Readiness Supervisor  
Mrs. Lisa Johnson, CNIC Ombudsman Program Coordinator  
Mrs. Doreen Scott, CNIC Ombudsman Training Coordinator  
Mr. Ed Roscoe, CNIC Management IT, Training Analyst

The meeting was called to order at 1302 by CNIC's Ombudsman Program Coordinator, Mrs. Lisa Johnson, and all members were introduced and welcomed. New members included:

- Mrs. Monica French, CNO Ombudsman-at-Large
- Mrs. Laure' Ferguson, Senior Leadership Spouse Advisor (VCNO)
- CDR David Mater, Exceptional Family Member Program
- CDR John Pucciarella, Command Leadership School
- Mrs. Marilyn Haumer, Command Leadership School

The minutes of the previous meeting on 22 Jun 11 were approved.

**Unfinished Business:**

There was no unfinished business.

**New Business:**

**eOBT**

eOBT, an alternative to traditional Ombudsman Basic Training, was introduced in November 2011. This blend of five webinars and five on-demand modules is targeted for

ombudsmen unable to attend OBT in a classroom setting. Work schedules, geographical locations, family commitments and command funding have been cited as reasons ombudsmen have been unable to fulfill the training requirement given in OPNAVINST 1750.1G. In the first three months, 41 ombudsmen from both active and reserve component commands have completed eOBT, thus fulfilling their training requirement.

CNIC encourages face to face classroom training, whenever possible, but are able to provide this additional training option.

### **Region Train the Trainer (RTT) IG**

CNIC HQ is in the process of creating an Instructor Guide for Region Train the Trainers (RTTs) who teach Certified Ombudsman Trainers (COTs). This great new training tool will ensure standardized training for all COTs. The end user, ombudsmen attending Ombudsman Basic Training (OBT), will be the final benefactor of this training guide by ensuring that all COTs are using a standardized approach to teaching OBT. Project completion is set for late June 2012.

### **“Navy Life” Mobile App for iPhone, iPod and iPad**

The March editions of Staff Connections Newsletter and Family Connections Newsletter have articles introducing the “Navy Life” app. These newsletters will be posted on the FFSP web site.

An Android version is being developed. The possibility of developing an app for Blackberry will be looked into.

This may be a tool for internal commands use, such as MCPON’s leadership board, etc.

### **Command Compliance with OPNAVINST 1750.1G**

Occasionally, there is concern from ombudsmen who are asked to perform duties that are not in compliance with OPNAVINST 1750.1G. Examples include being asked to report to another ombudsman instead of the CO or POC. This may include reporting “reportables”; submitting command rosters to another ombudsman – ombudsmen are not to share the command roster with anyone; providing personal financial information to another ombudsman for reimbursement purposes; and expectation to perform FRG leadership roles. Another concern brought up is commands having a non-command spouse or service member serving as ombudsman without an approved waiver request.

In these situations, our guidance to ombudsmen is to request a meeting with their CO/POC to discuss their concerns. They may cite the training they receive and the ombudsman instruction’s guidance. If the specific issue cannot be resolved and the ombudsman is not comfortable continuing, they have the option to resign.

As OPAG members interact with military leadership and ombudsmen, it is important to understand the issues ombudsmen sometimes face, and suggested action for possible resolution.

### **Ombudsmen serving on Joint Bases**

With the increase of joint basing, research is being conducted on the reality of providing ombudsmen representation to Navy families assigned to these commands, especially when the base lead is not the Navy. This growing trend will affect services such as MWR and clubs. It was noted that a Reserve Army base in Montana was very helpful to IA spouses, including Navy spouses. CNRSW expressed the need for direction in navigating through the challenges presented in these situations.

Adding sister services commands into the Ombudsman Registry in order to provide support to ombudsmen and those Navy personnel will also be addressed. It was also noted that in some cases, those serving as ombudsmen may be from a different service. It is important to note that anyone representing Navy families, regardless of their service orientation, should complete OBT.

### **Old Business**

There was no old business

### **Program Updates**

#### **Ombudsman Program Hot Topic Webinars**

Monthly Hot Topic webinars continue to be very popular amongst ombudsmen, FFSC staff and command leadership. Recent topics include: FRG and Command Ombudsmen, Social Media/OPSEC, Understanding ERB, Ombudsman Registry Training (Feb and Mar 2012) and FFSC Programs (May 2012).

#### **OPNAVINST 1750.1G**

OPNAVINST 1750.1G was released 21 Sep 11. It is posted on the FFSP web site at [www.ffsp.navy.mil](http://www.ffsp.navy.mil). The Ombudsman Program Manual has been modified to remove the previous instruction and include the updated edition. Please disregard references to the previous instruction within the body of the instruction. The manual is posted at the same site noted above.

### **Ombudsman Registry**

- Planning to aggressively market Ombudsman Registry this year
- Goal is to increase usage past 50%
- Worksheet compliance is improving
- Registry will go to a navy.mil site later this year – users will be able to access without CAC cards
- Registry instructions are being revised
- Hot Topic webinar in February and March is Ombudsman Registry Training
- USCG has been using our registry, but is in the process of developing their own; numbers may go down a little at conversion. Consider providing a monthly report or some kind of feedback to ombudsmen showing the value of completing worksheets. WIIFM? (What's in it for me?)

- Commands and TYCOMS can pull a report to see trends and the tone of the command/installations.
- Could use FB and Forum to note successes.
- If people see positive feedback, they will be more likely to use the registry accordingly.
- The cost avoidance to the command represents hours that commands would spend on issues that are now handled by ombudsmen.
- The CLS teaches the value of the worksheet – not necessarily “who” is having a problem, but that there IS a problem that needs to be addressed. The CO can then look into a situation and provide a solution.
- A discussion took place regarding the importance of showing ombudsman how their input in the registry/worksheets makes a valuable impact. This can be done by specifically finding a way to show the ombudsmen the “What’s in it for me” (WIIFM) factor.

### **ROABs**

Region Ombudsman Advisory Boards (ROABs) should meet twice a year. Regions make every effort to resolve issues brought to the ROAB within the region. If this is not possible, an action item report will be submitted to CNIC Ombudsman Program Coordinator for review. These items will be reported to the OPAG. At this time, there are no ROAB action items.

### **Fact Sheet**

The Ombudsman Program Fact Sheet is under revision. Upon its release, it will be posted on the FFSP web site at [www.ffsp.navy.mil](http://www.ffsp.navy.mil). This Fact Sheet may prove helpful to you when discussing the Ombudsman Program with leadership and ombudsmen.

### **Ombudsman Coordinator Town Hall Meeting**

In response to the cancellation of program conferences, CNIC Program Analysts have begun offering Town Hall Meeting webinars for FFSC staff over each program. A meeting for Ombudsman Coordinators is scheduled for Tuesday, 24 Apr 12 at 1000 ET. The Ombudsman Team will take this opportunity to discuss program updates and projects, and answer questions from coordinators. Registration will be available via the Learning Management System (LMS) at <http://learning.zeiders.com>.

### **Member Comments and Questions**

#### **Command Leadership School**

Will a new Ombudsman video be produced to replace the current one? This is a valuable teaching tool at Command Leadership School.

#### **RESFOR**

The Ombudsman Quick Series is a great tool, although it is quickly becoming outdated. Will this be updated soon? Renee Harris will research when the next scheduled revision is due.

**Stephanie DuBose** asked if there will be a Certified Ombudsman Trainer (COT) Symposium this year or next year. There will not be a COT Symposium this year, and most likely not in 2013. VADM French has stated that he will support programs already in place, but cannot discuss new expenditures at this time. FORCM Engles stated that 2014 and 2015 may be even leaner than this fiscal year's budget. Town Hall Meetings will provide an opportunity to meet with Ombudsman Coordinators. A meeting for Certified Ombudsman Trainers (COTs) may be planned.

**Mrs. Ferguson** asked if Bethesda has an ombudsman. They have in the past and they do have a current ombudsman. There is also a full service FFSC on the compound.

**Next Meeting**  
TBD

Meeting was adjourned at 1348.